Reflective Blog Activity

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Concerns, Thoughts, & Perceptions about curriculum and ELLs/ESL

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First of all, I am going to address curriculum. I think the curriculum that is in place right now is the pressing and advanced one the schools have ever seen. My concern with that is we are asking too much of our students. As a result of that, I think it is putting a lot of unnecessary pressure on the teachers. Especially when the students do not succeed and it looks bad on the teacher. Even though, the truth of the matte is we are setting our students up to fail from beginning by putting too much on their plates. I think that some of the students do okay with this curriculum because they are naturally smart. I do not think its fair for the students who struggle because they will be left behind more quickly. Once a child is left behind with such a pressing curriculum, it would put even more stress on the teacher to try and catch them up while also keeping everyone else on the right pace. I also think this pressing of a curriculum is stifling student’s creativity. For example, kindergarteners do not get to have station play. I think that station play, like in a kitchen setting, is almost just as important as curriculum learning. Students will never get to learn major life skills with this pressing of a curriculum. To sum it up, I just think this curriculum is a little too pressing for our students and teachers. Although with all of that being said, as a future teacher I am going to go into it with a positive attitude and make the best of it.

Next I am going to address my thoughts about ELL/ESL students. I think culture plays a big role in an ELL or an ESL student. I think culture majorly impacts language patterns. I do think that a student, like ELL/ESL, really needs culture diffusion. As well as learning our language, they need to interact with our culture and environments so they fit in. I personally think that an ELL/ESL student has to be terrified going into a school where no one speaks their language, not even their ESL teacher. I think those students have to work extra hard to be successful in school. Unlike the other students, they have to learn curriculum and a language at the same time. According to the stages of second language acquisition, this process is not short and definitely not easy. I think it is important for these students to be pulled out and learn with students like them, but I also think that being around children that their first language is English will help more than anything. Like BF Skinner said, “Children learn language through stimulus, response, and reinforcement.” However, I personally think that all ESL teachers should have to speak the child’s first language so the learning and comprehension can really happen. I think that these students have a easy time learning BICS because they pick that up through interaction with others, but most of them struggle and will struggle for the rest of their lives with CALP. I sometimes think we put too much on these children for us to expect them to succeed, but it is also impossible for them to be successful in life in America if they don’t go through all of those programs and procedures.